Captivity among the Sioux, August 18 to September 26, 1862 /

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CAPTIVITY AMONG THE SIOUX, AUGUST 18 TO SEPTEMBER 26, 1862.* BY MRS. N. D. WHITE.

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The story I bring to you includes what I saw and what occurred to myself and family during the most terrible Indian massacre that was ever known in our fair country. Fifteen thousand square miles of territory were overrun by the savages, and their trails in Minnesota were marked by blood and fire, while men, women, and innocent children were indiscriminately butchered or made prisoners.

I was born in the town of Alexander, Genesee county, New York, February 10th, 1825, my maiden name being Urania S. Frazer; and I was married to Nathan Dexter White, October 1st, 1845. The photograph reproduced in Plate XIV was taken at the completion of fifty-three years of our married life. We remained in New York state about two years, and then emigrated to Columbia county, Wisconsin, where we lived fifteen years. In the spring of 1862 we again turned our faces westward, and June 28th found us in Renville county, Minnesota.

Little did we think how soon we should pass through the terrible ordeal that awaited us. We commenced the erection of our log cabin at the base of the bluff in the valley of Beaver creek, near its opening into the wide Minnesota river valley, with stout hands and willing minds, looking hopefully forward to better times, for we thought we had selected the very heart of this western paradise for our home. Truly it was beautiful, even in its wild, uncultivated condition, with its gigantic trees in the creek valley, its towering bluffs, and

the sweet-scented wild flowers. A babbling brook formed a part of the eastern boundary of our land, and its broad acres of prairie made it 396 desirable enough to have satisfied the wishes of the most fastidious lover of a fine farm. We had just got settled in our new log house when the Sioux Indians who lived near us began to be uneasy.

Little Crow's village was situated about six miles from our house, across the Minnesota river. His warriors numbered about eight hundred. These Indians, with their families, by reason of the scarcity of buffaloes and other wild game, were largely dependent upon their annuities. They were supplied with provisions from the commissary stores at the Lower Sioux Indian Agency, near Little Crow's village; and they also received their annuities from the agent at this point. The summer of that eventful year was to all appearances very favorable to them, so far as crops were concerned. Their many cornfields, of nearly a thousand acres, bore promise of rich yield. But Little Crow was all the time, as was afterward proven, working upon his warriors in such a manner as to keep them excited and bloodthirsty. Indian treachery came to the surface. We frequently saw them on the tops of the bluffs overlooking our dwelling. They seemed to be watching for something. When questioned, they said they were looking for Ojibways. I think they must have held war meetings or councils, for we often heard drums in the evening on their side of the Minnesota river several weeks before the outbreak.

Reports came to us that some of the Indians had made a raid upon the commissary stoves at the Upper Agency; but we paid little attention to it, thinking it only a rumor.

The annuity was to have been paid in June; but, owing to the civil war that was then raging between the United and Confederate States, the money was delayed. The Indians were compelled to ward off starvation by digging roots for food. Three or four weeks previous to the outbreak, we could see squaws almost every day wandering over the prairie in search of the nutritious roots of the plant known to the French voyageurs as the “pomme de terre.” With a small pole about six feet long, having one end sharpened, they dug its tap-root,

which they called tipsinah, somewhat resembling a white English turnip in color, taste, and shape.

Many of the Indians had pawned their guns for provisions. My husband had taken several in exchange for beef cattle. 397 Among them was Little Crow's gun. This manner of dealing with the white man was not satisfactory to them; and especially to be compelled thus to part with their guns was very hard. Knowing the treachery of the Indians, none of us should have been surprised when this desperate outbreak overwhelmed us; and yet, when the eighteenth day of August, 1862, came, with its cloudless sky, not one of the scattered settlers was prepared for the carnage and death which these cunning plotters designed for them. So secretly had each Indian performed his allotted part in the working up of this terrible tragedy in which they were to be the heartless actors and we the helpless victims.

At this time nearly every farmer was busy making hay; but my husband fortunately was on a trip to Blue Earth county, about sixty miles southeast of us. I say fortunately, because every man stood in great danger of being killed; and in all probability that would have been his fate, if he had been with us, as no men among the settlers were taken prisoners.

FLIGHT, AMBUSH, AND MASSACRE.

The first outbreak, the attack on our fleeing party, and the beginning of my captivity, were on Monday, August 18th; and I was released thirty-nine days afterward, on September 26th.

While I was busily engaged gathering up the clothing for the purpose of doing my washing on the morning of the outbreak, my daughter Julia, fourteen years old, who had been assisting at the house of Mr. Henderson, about a half mile from us, whose-wife was very sick, came running in, accompanied by a daughter of Mr. J. W. Earle, and breathlessly told me that the Indians were coming to kill us, and that I must go back with them quick. This frightened me, in fact, it seemed to strike me dumb; but, suddenly recovering my thoughts,

I immediately began planning what we should take with us. Soon I came to the conclusion that it would be folly to attempt to take anything. But on moving my husband's overcoat I caught sight of a large pocketbook that contained valuable papers and some money. This I quickly secured, 398 and managed to keep it during all my captivity. I caught up my baby boy, five months old, and placed him on one arm, and took Little Crow's gun in the other hand. My daughter also carried a gun. We hurriedly wended our way to the house of the sick neighbor, and thence went to the house of Mr. Earle.

There I found my twelve-year-old son Millard, who had been herding sheep. Having learned of the trouble with the Indians, he had driven the sheep up auld put them in the yard. Eugene, my oldest son, had gone out on the prairie to bring in our colts, to keep them from the Indians, because they were collecting all the horses in the neighborhood to ride, as they said, in hunting Ojibways, that being the excuse they gave for this bold robbery. He found that the Indians had already got the colts and were breaking them to ride, having them in a slough, where they could easily handle them. Consequently he came back to the house of Mr. Earle. On his way back he met Mr. Weichman, a neighbor just from the Agency, who told him that the Indians were killing all the white people there.

At the house of Mr. Earle twenty-seven neighbors were assembled, men, women and children. Teams of horses were soon hitched To wagons, and we started on our perilous journey.

The Indians, anticipating our flight and knowing the direction we should be likely to take, had secreted themselves in ambush on either side of the road in the tall grass. On our arrival in the ambush, twenty or thirty Indians in their war paint rose to their feet; they did not shoot, but surrounded us, took our horses by the bits, and commanded us to surrender to them all our teams, wagons, and everything except the clothing we had on. A parley with them in behalf of the sick woman was had by one of our number who could speak the Sioux language. The Indians finally consented that we might go, if we would leave all the

teams, wagons, etc., except one team and a light wagon in which Mrs. Henderson and her two children had been placed on a feather bed.

We felt a little more hopeful at getting such easy terms of escape, but our hopes were of short duration; for they soon 399 became dissatisfied with the agreement they had made and gave notice that they must have our last team, and we were forced to stop and comply with their demand. The team was given up, and the Indians said we might go. Several men took hold of the wagon, and we again started, feeling that there was still a little chance of escape. We had gone only a short distance when we were made fully aware of the treachery that predominates in the Indian character. They commenced shooting at the men drawing the wagon. Mr. Henderson and Mr. Wedge, in compliance with Mrs. Henderson's wishes, held up a pillowslip as a flag of truce; but the Indians kept on firing. The pillowslip was soon riddled. Mr. Henderson's fingers on one hand were shot off, and Mr. Wedge was killed.

Then commenced a flight, a run for life, on the open prairie, by men, women, and children, unarmed and defenceless, before the cruel savages armed with guns, tomahawks, and scalping knives. Imagine, if you can, the awful sight here presented to my view, both before and after being captured,—strong men making desperate efforts to save themselves and their little ones from the scalping knives of their merciless foes, who were in hot pursuit, shooting at them rapidly as they ran. Before the Indians passed me, the bullets were continually whizzing by my head. Those who could escape, and their murderous enemies, were soon out of my sight. In one instance, a little boy was shot and killed in his father's arms.

Woe and despair now seized all of us who were made captives. The bravest among us lost courage, being so helpless, defenceless, and unprepared for this act of savage warfare. With blanched faces we beheld the horrible scene and clasped our helpless little children closer to us. Then fearful thoughts of torture crowded into our minds, as Mrs. Henderson and her two children were taken rudely from the bed in the wagon, thrown

violently on the ground, and covered with the bed, to which a torch was applied. The blaze grew larger and higher, and I could see no more! My courage sank as I wondered in a dazed, half insane manner, what would be our fate and that of other friends. The two little children, I was afterward told, had their heads crushed by blows struck with 400 violins belonging to the family of Mr. Earle. The burial party sent out by General Sibley from Fort Ridgely found the violins, with the brains and hair of the poor little innocents still sticking to them, two weeks later. Mr. Henderson was afterward killed at the battle of Birch Coulie, September 2d.

Nine of our number were killed here in this flight, among them being our oldest son, Eugene, then about sixteen years old. Eleven were taken prisoners, among these being myself, my babe, and my daughter, fourteen years old.

Seven made their escape, my twelve-year-old son being among them. They started for Fort Ridgely, a distance of twenty miles, thinking that there they would be safe; but, on arriving near the fort, they could see so many Indians skulking around that they thought it extremely dangerous to make any further effort to reach the fort. They then decided to go to Cedar Lake, a distance of thirty miles north. Their boots and shoes were filled with water in wading through sloughs and became a great burden to them, so that they were compelled to take them off to expedite their flight. Consequently, in traveling through coarse wet grass, the flesh on their feet and ankles was worn and lacerated until the bones were bare in places. They could get no food, and starvation stared at them with its gnawing pangs. They were hatless in the scorching sunshine, and were completely worn out by wading through sloughs and hiding in the tall grass,—in fact, doing anything to make their escape from the Indians.

When within ten or fifteen miles of Cedar Lake, the strongest man of the party was sent ahead for help, to get food for those who were unable to walk much farther. On reaching a rise of ground he turned quickly, motioned to them, and then threw himself in the tall grass. The others of the party knew that this meant danger and hid themselves as quickly as

possible. Soon sharp reports of guns came to their ears. They supposed, of course, that the young man was killed; but it was not so. These Indians, five in number, had been away on a visit; and consequently they had not heard of the massacre. They were returning to Little Crow's village. The young man was not seen by these Indians: but the others had been seen before dropping in the grass. They fired their guns for the 401 purpose of reloading, and soon tracked the party with whom my son was to their hiding places by their trail in the wet grass. My son noticed one of them skulking along on his trail, and watching him very intently. He supposed that the Indian would shoot him; so he turned his face away, and waited for the bullet that was to take his life. What a terrible moment it was to a lad of only twelve years!

But as no shot was fired, he turned his head to see what the Indian was doing. The Indian then asked him what was the matter. Fearing to tell the truth, he told him that the Ojibways were killing all the white people in their neighbor, hood, and also told how hungry they were.

The Indians gave them some cold boiled potatoes, turning them on the ground, and asked to trade for Little Crow's gun, which one of the party had received from me. Not daring to refuse, they gave them the gun, which was a very handsome one. The Indians now left them, and they managed to reach Cedar Lake, being the first to carry the news of the outbreak to that place. My son traveled from Cedar Lake to St. Peter without further hardship.

The day when the outbreak commenced my husband was on his return from Blue Earth county with Mr. and Mrs. Jacobson, parents of the sick Mrs. Henderson. Late in the afternoon, when within six miles of New Ulm, they met a large number of settlers, men, women, and children, fleeing for their lives, who told them that the Sioux Indians had commenced a desperate raid upon the settlers in the vicinity of New Ulm, that many of them had been killed, and that the Indians were then besieging the village; also that word:

from Renville county had been received, that all the settlers in the neighborhood of Beaver Creek and Birch Coulie were murdered, if they had failed to make their escape.

Having remained with the fleeing party until morning, my husband started on his return to the home of Mr. Jacobson, a distance of thirty miles. On his way back he saw farms deserted and cattle running at large in fields of shocked grain. At Madelia he found an assemblage of set tiers contemplating the idea of making a stand against the Indians. They resolved not to be driven from their homes by the Sioux, thinking 26 402 that they could defend themselves by building breastworks of logs which were at hand. Consequently my husband remained with them one day, and assisted in the building of the fortification, until reliable information came to them that there were so many Indians engaged in the outbreak that it would be impossible for them to make a successful stand. Therefore, after taking Mr. and Mrs. Jacobson to their home, he started for St. Peter, where he arrived on Saturday, the 23d day of August.

There he met Millard, our twelve-year-old son, who narrated to him the dismal tidings of the outbreak; that his mother, sister, and little baby brother, were taken off by the Indians; and that Eugene was hit by a bullet in the leg while running in advance of him. He told how Eugene ran about a fourth of a mile after being wounded, then turned a little to one side of the course they were running, and dropped into a cluster of weeds. The Indians were soon upon him with their scalping knives. In casting a look back he saw them apparently in the act of taking his scalp.

My husband's team of horses and his carriage were pressed into military service at St. Peter. He went with General Sibley's forces from St. Peter to Fort Ridgely, intending to, go with them on their expedition against the Indians. But it fell to his lot to remain at the fort until after our release.

CAPTIVES TAKEN TO LITTLE CROW'S VILLAGE.

When I was captured, my captor seized me by the shoulders, turned me quickly around, and motioned for me to turn back. At this I screamed, partly for the purpose of calling Mr. Earle's attention to see that I was a prisoner, and he looked around. This I did thinking that he might escape and give the tidings to my relatives and friends.

Just before I was captured, my son Eugene, who was afterward killed, passed me and said. “Ma, run faster, or they will catch you.” This was the last time I heard him speak or saw him, and he must have been killed soon afterward.

It was now near the middle of the day; the heat of the sun was very intense: and we (the captives) were all suffering for drink. I sat down a moment to rest, and then thought of my 403 dress, which had become very wet while wading through a slough; so I sucked some water from it, which relieved my thirst a little.

We captives and a few of the Indians walked back to the house of Mr. J. W. Earle. The Indians entered the house, and delighted themselves by breaking stoves and furniture of various kinds and throwing crockery through the windows. After they had completed, the destruction of everything in the house which they did not wish to appropriate for their own use, we were put into wagons and, ordered to be taken to Little Crow's village.

Members of families were separated and taken to different places, seemingly to add to our suffering by putting upon us the terrible agony of wondering where the other prisoners were and what was to be their fate. During this ride we passed several houses belonging to settlers who had been killed or had fled to save their lives. The Indians entered these houses and plundered, them of many valuables, such as bedding and clothing. On our way to the Minnesota bottomland we had to descend a very steep bluff, where, by our request, the Indians gave us the privilege of walking down.

After reaching the foot of the bluff, our course was through underbrush of all kinds. The thought of torture was uppermost in my mind. I supposed that was why such a course was

taken. There was no road at all, not even a track. We were compelled to make our way as best we could through grape vines, prickly ash, gooseberry bushes, and trees. After much difficulty in bending down small trees in order to let our wagons pass over them, we finally reached the Minnesota river with many rents in our clothing and numerous scratches on our arms.

When fording the river, we were all given a drink of river water, some sugar, and a piece of bread. The sugar and bread were taken from the house of one of my neighbors. Just as we were driving into the water. the wagon containing my daughter with other captives was disappearing beyond the top of the bluff on the other side of the river. I thought again, What will befall her?

We soon reached Little Crow's village, where we were kept about a week. The village numbered, about sixty tepees, besides 404 Little Crow's dwelling, a frame building. Mrs. James Carrothers, Mrs. J. W. Earle and a little daughter, myself and babe, were taken to Little Crow's. On entering the house the object that first met my gaze was Little Crow, a large, tall Indian, walking the floor in a very haughty, dignified manner, as much as, to say, “I am great!” However, his majesty condescended to salute us with “Ho,” that being their usual word of greeting. The room was very large. The furniture consisted of only a few chairs, table, and camp kettles. A portion of the floor at one end of the room was raised about one foot, where they slept on blankets. His four wives, all sisters, were busily engaged packing away plunder which had been taken from stores and the houses of settlers. They gave us for our supper bread and tea. Soon after tea, Mrs. Carrothers and myself were escorted to a tepee where we remained until morning, when we were claimed by different Indians.

I have reason for believing that an emissary from the Confederate States had been among these Indians urging and encouraging them to their fierce outbreak and warfare against the innocent settlers. I heard Little Crow say, on the first day of my captivity, after he had been looking over some papers, that he was going to sell the Minnesota valley to the

Southern States. An Indian told Mrs. James Carrothers, on the day of our capture, that they expected to sell Minnesota to the South. Mrs. Carrothers could speak the Sioux language.

It happened to be my lot in the distribution of the prisoners to be owned by Too-kon-we-chasta (meaning the “Stone Man”) and his squaw. They called me their child, or “big papoose.” Their owning me in this manner saved me probably from a worse fate than death; and although mere than a third of a century has elapsed since that event, strange as it may appear to some, I cherish with kindest feelings the friendship of ray Indian father and mother. Too-kon-we-chasta was employed by General Sibley as a scout on his expedition against the Indians in the summer of 1863. He now lives across the Minnesota river from Morton, in Redwood county, on a farm. He and his squaw called on me several times when we were living near Beaver Falls. They manifested a great deal of friendship. There is a wide difference in the moral character of Indians.

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Before retiring for the night we were commanded to make ourselves squaw suits. The squaws told us how to make them, and mine was made according to their directions. Mrs. Carrothers failed to make hers as told, and consequently was ordered to rip it apart and make it over. I put mine on while she was making hers as first told. When finished she put it on. We thought our looks were extremely ludicrous. She cast a queer gaze at me, and then commenced laughing. I said to her that under the circumstances I could see nothing to laugh about. She replied that we might better laugh than cry, for we had been told that the Indians would have no tears, and that those who cried would be first to die.

I also had to lay aside my shoes and wear moccasins. The last I saw of my shoes, an Indian boy about a dozen years old was having great sport with them by tossing them with his feet to see how high he could send them.

On the third day of my Captivity I was taken out by my squaw mother a short distance from our tepee, beside a cornfield fence, and was given to understand that I must remain there until she came for me. After being there a short time an old squaw came to me, and, leaning against the fence, gazed at me some time before speaking. Finally she said in a low voice. “Me Winnebago; Sioux nepo papoose,” and then left. I never learned why I was taken out there, but have thought since that the Indians had decided to kill my child, as “nepo papoose” means “kill a baby;” that my squaw mother took me there for the purpose of hiding my child from the Indians; and that being afraid to give the reason herself, She sent this old squaw from another tribe to tell me.

During this week of tepee life the ludicrous alternated with the sublime, the laughable with the heart-breaking and pathetic. We saw papooses of all sizes robed in rich laces and bedecked in many fantastic styles with silk fabrics. until one must laugh despite all their fearful surroundings. When the laugh died on our lips, the terrible thought crowded into our minds. Where did these things come from? What tales could they tell if power were given, them to speak? Where are the butchered and mutilated forms that once wore them? My heart was crushed, my brain reeled, and, I grew faint and sick 406 wondering, or rather trying not to wonder, what would be our own fate.

The Indians through plunder had on hand a good supply of provisions, consisting of flour, dried fruit, groceries of various kinds, and an abundance of fresh meat. Their manner of cooking was not very elaborate; an epicure would not have relished it as well as we did, until after being forced by the pain or weakness caused by the want of food. Hunger will make food cooked after the manner of the Indians palatable.

At times it seemed to me as though a hand had-grasped my throat and was choking me every time I tried to swallow food, so great was the stricture brought about by the fearful tension on the nervous system. Truly and well has it been said that no bodily suffering, however great, is so keen as mental torture.

My squaw mother was our cook. She mixed bread in a six-quart pan by stirring flour into about two quarts of warm water, with one teacupful of tallow and a little saleratus, bringing it to the consistency of biscuit dough. She then took the dough out of the pan, turned it bottom side up on the ground, placed the dough on the pan, patted it fiat with her hands, cut it in small pieces, and fried it in tallow. Potatoes they usually roasted in, the hot embers of the camp fire. Their manner of broiling beefsteak was not much of a trick, but very remarkable for labor saving. They put the steak across two sticks over the blaze, without salting, and in a few minutes it was done. By so doing they did not have the trouble of cleaning a broiling pan. Tripe was an extremely favorite dish among them, and they were quite quick in its preparation. The intestines were taken between the thumb and finger, the contents were squeezed out, and then, without washing, the tripe was broiled and prepared in regular Indian epicurean style. Truly these noble red people can justly be called a labor-saving people, whatever other qualifies they may lack.

They follow their white brothers in their love for tea and coffee, which they make very strong. They sometimes flavored their coffee with cinnamon. My share of coffee was always given me in a pint bowl with three tablespoonfuls of sugar in it. I ate some bread, which, with my tea and coffee, composed my bill of fare while with them. In fact, I think I could not 407 have eaten the most delicious meal ever prepared by civilized people while a prisoner among these savages, with my family tilled or scattered as they were and my own fate still preying on my mind.

The Indians were all great lovers of jewelry, as every school child knows. Every captive was stripped of all jewelry and other valuables in her possession. The Sioux did not wear rings in their noses, like some tribes; but every other available place on the body was utilized to good advantage on which to display jewelry. The clocks that had been plundered from many a peaceful home were taken to pieces and made to do service in this line of decoration. The large wheels were used for earrings, and the smaller ones as bangles on bracelets and armlets.

They were also very proud of being able to carry a watch; but their clothing, being devoid of pockets, lacked the most essential convenience for this purpose, Consequently some of them would, in derision, fasten the chain around the ankle and let the watch drag on the ground.

You may think it strange that I took any notice of these little incidents. However trifling it may have been for me to observe their antics, it certainly had the effect partially to relieve me of the great weight that pressed so heavily on my mind. I looked at my poor little starving babe, and saw that he was growing thinner every day from pure starvation. I thought of my husband and children, whose fate I might never know. Had I given way to all the terrors of my situation, I should not have been spared to meet my family or had any chance of escape, but should have met instant death at the hands of my cruel captors. May will sustained me and forced. me to take note of these insignificant things, so that I might not sink or give up to the dreadful reality I was passing through. I said to one of my neighbor captives, when we were first made prisoners, that I felt just like singing, so near did I in my excitement border on insanity. I have thought since many times that, had I given up to the impulse and sung, it would have been a wild song and I should have certainly crossed the border of insanity and entered its confines, Even now, after thirty-six years. I look back and shudder, and my heart nearly stops beating, when these awful things present 408 themselves fully to my mind, The wonder to me is how I ever endured it all.

The warriors were away all the time we were in Little Crow's village. They came back in time to escort us when we moved. They told us they had burned Fort Ridgely and New Ulm, and would soon have all the palefaces in the state killed. This was said, no doubt, to make our trials more painful, and that we might realize the full extent of their power.

All the time I remained in Little Crow's village my bed. shawl, and sunbonnet, covering for myself and babe, both night and day, consisted of only one poor old cotton sheet; and on our first move I gave it to an Indian to carry while we forded the Redwood river. Indian-like,

he kept it. So my squaw mother gave me an old, dirty, strong-scented blanket, which I was compelled to wear around me in squaw fashion.

On the fourth day of my captivity, the squaws went out on the slough and came back with their arms full of wet grass. which was scattered over the ground inside the tepee to keep us out of the mud caused by the heavy rains. Every night when I lay down on this wet grass to sleep, I would think that perhaps I should not be able to get up again; and sometimes I became almost enough discouraged to wish that I would never be able to rise again, so terrible was my experience.

I was frequently sent by the squaws to the Minnesota river. a quarter of a mile distant, to bring water for tepee use. At one time I passed several tepees where Indians and half-breeds camped. On my return they set up a frightful whoop and yell, which nearly stunned me with fear. However, I kept on my way, drew my old sheet closer around me, and hurried back as fast as possible. As I entered our tepee, I drew a long breath of relief. I was not sent there for water again.

My sunbonnet was taken from me when I was first captured. The Indians used it for a kinnikinick bag. Kinnikinick is a species of shrub from which they scrape the bark to smoke with their Indian tobacco. They have some very long pipes. While smoking they let the bowl of the pipe rest on the ground. When this long pipe was first-lighted, the custom among them was to pass it around each Indian and squaw in the company taking two or three puffs: I never saw a 409 squaw smoke except when this long pipe was passed around. The pipe was not presented to me to take a puff. I believe this pipe was known as the pipe of peace.

ON THE MARCH WESTWARD.

A week having elapsed since we were taken to Little Crow's village, and the warriors having all returned, an aged Indian marched through the village calling out “Puckachee! Puckachee!” before every tepee; and then the squaws immediately commenced taking

down the tepees. We understood that the crier had given command for a move, but whither we did not know. Their manner of moving was very ingenious. Every tepee has, six poles, about fifteen feet long, which were fastened by strips of rawhide placed around the pony's neck and breast, three poles on each side of the pony, With the small ends on the ground. A stick was tied to the poles behind the pony to keep them together and spread in the shape of a V; and on the stick and poles bundles of various kinds, kettles, and even papooses were fastened when occasion required. It is astonishing to see the amount of service these natives will get out of one tepee and an Indian pony.

After getting the wagons and the pole and pony conveyances loaded, and everything else in readiness, our procession was ordered to “puckachee;” and away we went, one hundred and seven white prisoners and about the same number of half-breeds who called themselves prisoners (they may have been prisoners in one sense of the word), eight hundred warriors, their families, and luggage of various kinds. We had a train three miles long. On either side of our procession were mounted warriors, bedecked with war paint, feathers, and ribbons; and they presented a very gay appearance, galloping back and forth on each side of this long train. Their orders were to shoot any white prisoner that ventured to pass through their ranks. This was done, of course, to intimidate the prisoners. I shall never forget the varied sights this motley procession presented to my view,—the warrior in his glory, feasting over the fact that he had killed or captured so many of his white enemies and thereby gotten his revenge for the great wrongs he had suffered from them; and the innocent victims, the prisoners, so woe-begone, so heart-broken, so grotesque and awkward 410 in their Indian dress, paying the awful penalty that the red man imagined the white man owed him, for an Indian cares not whether it is the perpetrator of a wrong or not, if he finds some white victim whereon to wreak his revenge.

Our ears were almost deafened by the barking of dogs, the lowing of cattle, the “Puckachee! Whoa! Gee!” of the Indians in driving their teams of oxen, the neighing of horses, the braying of mules, the rattle of heavy wagons. In fact, to me it seemed like

a huge chaotic mass of living beings making desperate efforts to escape some great calamity.

On we went with the utmost speed, the Indians seeming to be in great glee. We crossed the Redwood river about one mile from its entrance into the Minnesota river. The stream, swollen by recent heavy rains and having a strong current, was difficult and even dangerous to ford. Mrs. Earle, her daughter, and myself, locked arms while crossing. Mrs. Earle's feet were once taken from under her, and she would have gone down stream had it not been for the aid received from us. A squaw carried my babe across. Every Indian and squaw seemed to be in a great rush to cross first. They dashed pellmell into the water, regardless of their chances to land their teams.

On this march I had to walk and carry my child. I carried him on my arms, which was very disgusting to the squaws. They frequently took him from my arms and placed him on my back, squaw-fashion, but he always managed somehow to slip down and I had him in my arms again. Before noon I became so tired that I sat down to rest beside the road. The squaws, in passing me, would say “Puckachee!” But I remained sitting about ten minutes, I should think, when an old Indian came to me and took hold of my hand to help me up. I shook my head. He then had the train halt, or a part of it. a short time. I afterward learned that a council was held, the object being to come to some agreement as to how they would deal with me. Some thought best to kill me and my child; others thought not. The final conclusion was to take my child, place him on a loaded wagon, and start the train. Then, if I did not “puckachee,” they would kill me and the baby also. They started, after putting the child on a wagon and I followed, taking hold of the end-board of the wagon, 411 which proved to be a great help to me to the end of our day's march. We followed up the Minnesota river valley until we came to Rice creek, reaching that point about sundown, having traveled nearly eighteen miles.

Our tepees were soon pitched, and everything quickly settled into the usual routine of tepee life. Then I wandered and searched around among the tepees to see if I could find my daughter and other friends who helped to make this long train.

After a short walk among the Indians and tepees, I was completely overjoyed at meeting my daughter, whom I had not seen since we forded the Minnesota river on the day we were made captives. It was like seeing one risen from the dead to meet her. She was as happy as myself. And oh! how pleased we were that so far we had been spared not only from death, but, worse than that, the Indian's lust. Killing beef cattle, cooking, and eating, seemed to be done in great glee in this camp.

The fourth day of our stay here the command “Puckachee!” was sent along as before, and our gigantic motley cavalcade, with its strange confusion, was soon on the move westward again. We passed Yellow Medicine village, near which the Upper Sioux Agency was located. As we came in sight of it, we could see the barracks burning, also the mills situated at this point where we crossed the Yellow Medicine river. John Other Day, who was a friend to the whites and was the means of saving sixty-two lives, had his house burned to the ground.

We stopped after traveling a distance of ten miles, and remained there eight or ten days. That part of the train where I was, pitched their tepees beside a mossy slough, from which we obtained water for tepee use. The first few days the water covered the moss and could be dipped with a cup. The cattle were allowed to stand in it, and dozens of little Indians were playing in it every day; consequently the water soon became somewhat unpalatable to the fastidious. However, we continued to use it. After remaining there three or four days, the water sank below the moss. To get it then we had to go out on the moss and stand a few minutes, when the water would collect about our feet. It is astonishing how some persons will become reconciled to such things when forced upon them.

A papoose was very sick here, but nothing was given it to relieve the little sufferer. It died about sundown. They made no demonstrations of grief when it died, nor mourned in the least; but after an hour or two the warriors returned, and I suppose that when notified they must have given the mourning signal. A dismal wailing was then begun and was continued about a half hour. It stopped just as suddenly as it began, and not another sound was heard. I did not know when or where the remains were deposited, so stealthy were they in their movements.

The death of this baby caused me to think of the probable death of my own. The little fellow was a mere skeleton. I was only able to get a small quantity of milk for him once in two days. This was all that kept him from starving. To hold him and watch him, knowing that he was gradually pining away, was what I hope no mother will ever be called upon to witness.

The usual manner of the wild Sioux in disposing of their dead was to wrap the body in blankets and place it on a scaffold made of poles not more than four or five feet from the ground. If it was in a wooded country, the scaffold was constructed of poles placed in the branches of low trees. During one or two years the scaffold and wrap containing the corpse were kept in order. Offerings of food were often made to the ghost which was supposed to linger near until the memory of great grief became dim. Afterward no more care or attention was given to the remains. In time of war, when any of their number were killed in battle or otherwise, they were, if possible, removed and secreted from the enemy. They were very superstitious. They believed that if their killed fell into the hands of their enemy, they would be made slaves in the future life. Famous chiefs, and warriors who had gained great notoriety in war exploits, were sometimes buried sitting astride a live pony. They were buried on top of the ground by placing layer after layer of prairie sod around and over them until they were entirely covered. This grave or mound thereafter remained intact; nothing was allowed to destroy it.

It was no uncommon occurrence to see the Indians, just before going out on a raid or to battle, decorating themselves 413 with feathers, ribbons, and paint. The most hideous looking object I ever beheld was a large, tall Indian, who had besmeared his face all over with vermillion red, and then had painted a stripe of green around each eye and his mouth, thickly dotting these stripes with bright yellow paint. Others would paint their faces red, and then apply a bright coat of yellow, which gave it a sunset hue, after which a blue flower was usually painted on each cheek. Some of them would daub their faces with something that looked like dark blue clay, and then would make zigzag streaks down their faces with their fingers, leaving a stripe of clay and,—well, a streak of Indian.

The squaws seemed to take great pride in ornamenting their head and hair. They usually parted their hair in the middle of the forehead, plaited it in two braids, and tied the ends firmly with buckskin strings, on which were strung three large glass beads at the end of each string. Then they painted a bright red streak over the head where the hair was parted. I saw one squaw with five holes in the rim of each ear, from which hung five brass chains dangling on her shoulders, with a dollar gold piece fastened to each chain.

After the warriors had completed the work of painting to their liking, they gathered in small squads, seemingly for consultation. They presented a very frightful appearance. Soon they began to gather in larger parties and start off in different directions, for the purpose, as I supposed, of victimizing some innocent settler. Many cattle were now being brought into camp, but no captives; which led me to believe that they massacred indiscriminately men, women, and children, and that proved to have been the case. The squaws seemed at all times to be highly elated over the good success the Indians had in bringing into camp beef cattle; “ta-ton-koes,” they called them. They were also well pleased with the false reports which the Indians made in stating that they had killed or driven nearly all the white people from Minnesota.

To save labor in harvesting and hauling corn and potatoes into camp, we made many short moves from one enclosure to another. Cattle, horses, and ponies, were turned loose

in the fields of grain. As soon as the supply was exhausted, we 414 moved on. At the end of one remove, I saw an old squaw with a very nice black silk shawl, which she had worn over her head, squaw-fashion, while on the move, climb over a rail fence and throw the shawl on the ground in the potato field. Then with all her might she commenced digging or scratching out potatoes' with her hands, throwing them on the shawl until she had gathered nearly a half bushel, after which she gathered up the corners of the shawl, threw them over her shoulder, and hurried away to the campfire.

For one reason, we were always glad to move; it furnished us a clean camp ground for a few days. But oh! the thought that I was a prisoner in the hands of savage Indians, moving on farther and farther from relatives, friends, and civilization, into the far Northwestern wilds, inhabited only by cruel savages who live in tepees, and cold weather coming on! I met an old Frenchman who had married a squaw and had lived with the Indians a long time. He could speak a little English. Judge what my feelings must have been when he said to me. “I 'spect you'll all die when cold weather comes,” meaning the white captives.

Many times have I reluctantly retired for the night on the cold damp ground with my child on my arm, unable to sleep, thinking of friends and home. If by chance my eyes were closed in sleep, I would sometimes dream of seeing Indians perpetrating some act of cruelty on innocent white captives. Occasionally I would dream of having made my escape from my captors, and was safe among my relatives and friends in a civilized country. But on awaking from my slumbers, oh! the anguish of mind, the heart-crushing pangs of grief, to again fully realize that I was a prisoner still among the Indians, not knowing how soon I would be subjected to the cruelties of these revengeful savages!

In order to make myself as agreeable as possible to them, I feigned cheerfulness, and took particular notice of their papooses, hoping that by so doing I would receive better treatment from them, which I think had the desired effect. Once I was unable to suppress my feelings while in the presence of my Indian father who was quick to observe my gushing tears and heart throbs which must have excited his sympathy for 415 me. He

said, through an interpreter that he would give me bread and let me go; “but,” said he, “the warriors will find you and kill you,”—as much as to say, “You had better remain with us.” This was after we had gone so far from white settlements that it would have been impossible for me to make my way on foot and alone through the Indian country.

While in the camp beside the mossy slough, Little Grow and twenty or thirty of his chief warriors had a war council and dog feast. They occupied a place on the prairie a short distance outside of the camp ground, where they seated themselves on the ground in a circle around a large kettle, hung over a fire, in. which the carcass of a fat dog was being boiled. The United States flag was gracefully waving over their detestable heads. What a contrast between this exhibition of hostile Indians and the gathering of loyal citizens of the United States under the stars and stripes, celebrating our nation's birthday!

These dusky savages seemed to have parliamentary rules of their own. One would rise, with stolid dignity, and deliver his harangue, after which they one by one would dip their ladles into the kettle of dog soup, until each had served himself to soup. Then came another speech and another dip by all. Thus they alternated until all or nearly all had their say and had their appetite satisfied with canine soup. Dog soup by them is considered to be a superb and honored dish. None but Indians of high rank were allowed to partake.

Dog beef was sometimes cooked by hanging the dog in a horizontal position by both fore and hind legs under a pole over a fire, without being dressed, except that the entrails were removed. When dogs are cooked in this manner, all are allowed to partake.

These natives generally used their fingers in conveying food to their mouths. If their meat was too hard, to crush with their teeth or too tough to tear with their fingers and teeth, they would firmly hold the meat in their teeth and one hand, and with a sharp knife in the other hand, cut the meat between the teeth and fingers.

On the eighth or tenth day of our stay here the word “Puckachee!” greeted our ears, and everything was soon in readiness 416 for a move, but it was a Very short one. We stopped

beside a small stream called Hazel Run. Beside this stream had been built residences for missionaries, which were burned to the ground soon after our tepees were pitched.

After remaining here two or three days, we were given orders as before to move on, and went only three or four miles. On the way we passed several small lakes, and our train was stopped long enough near one of them to allow the squaws to do some, washing. This was the first washing that had been done since my stay with them. The squaws' mode of washing their wardrobes was to walk into water two or three feet deep, then quickly lower and raise themselves, and at the same time rub with their hands. Their wet clothing was allowed to remain on them to dry. The squaws, in washing their faces, would take water in their mouths, spurt it into their hands and rub it over their faces, but used no towel.

Here the squaws began to pay much attention to my poor starving babe. They would put their hands on his head and say, over and over, “Washta, washta do,” meaning “good, very good.”

When we stopped to pitch the tepees again, the Indians had what they called a horse dance, I did not learn whether it celebrated any particular event, or was merely for amusement. Before they commenced it, they decked their ponies with cedar boughs, and the warriors with feathers and ribbons. Then each warrior mounted his pony and paraded around in a meaningless manner, as it seemed to me.

Soon after this horse dance, my squaw mother came to me in a very excited manner, took hold of me and fairly dragged me into the tepee, telling me that the Sissetons were coming to carry me off. She hastily threw an old blanket over me, and there I remained with my babe in my arms for hours. I finally fell asleep and must have slept quite a while. Soon after waking I was given to understand that I might go out. I learned that there were about a hundred and twenty-five of the Sisseton, tribe with us. They remained three days, and left camp taking nothing but a few ponies with them.

While in this camp my daughter came to me. crying as though her heart would break, and told me an Indian was 417 coming that night to claim her for his wife. I did not know what would be best to do. After thinking the matter over, I concluded to consult with a half-breed we called “Black Robinson” in regard to the trouble. After hearing what I had to say, he remarked, “An Indian is nothing but a hog, anyway. I will see what can be done about it.” I returned and told my daughter what he said, and she returned to her tepee home, leaving me to worry over the great danger that threatened her. Time and time again I thought, Will this terrible calamity that has come to us ever end? Fortunately, we heard no more of this trouble.

While walking out one afternoon, my attention was called to the way in which the squaws sometimes put their papooses to sleep. They were fastened on a board about eight inches wide, with a footrest, and ornamented with net work at the head, made of willow twigs. They were wrapped to the board, with their arms straight down by their sides and their feet on the footrest, by winding strips of cloth around them. They cry and shake their heads a few minutes before going to sleep. In warm weather, unless it was storming, they were placed outside to sleep, in nearly an erect position.

The Indians and squaws had rules of etiquette which they strictly observed, and would frequently admonish me concerning them. They would tell me how to sit on the ground; how to stand; and how to go in and out the tepee door, which was very low. I think they must have considered me a dull scholar, for I could not conform, or would not, to all their notions of gentility. The Indians would frequently have a hearty laugh to see me go in and out the tepee door. They said I went in just like a frog. The tepees were of uniform size, about twelve feet in diameter on the ground, with a door about three feet high, that is, merely a parting of the tent cloth or hides, of which latter the tepees were usually made.

One dark and dreary rainy day I was put into a tepee made of buffalo hides. The perfume of the hides was not very pleasant to the smell; however, it accorded well with my other surroundings. Why I was put into this tepee I know not, unless it was to be entertained

by a Sioux quartette. I had only been in there a short time when four warriors came in, 27 418 dressed in blankets, with their faces shockingly painted with war paint and their heads decorated with long feathers. Surely they presented a fearful sight. Each had a stick about two feet long. They paid no attention to me, but seated themselves, Indian style, on the ground in a circle in front of me, and beat time by striking on the ground with their sticks, at the same time singing, or saying, “Ki-o-wah-nay, ki-o-wah-nay, ki-o-wah-nay, yaw-ah—ah.” After repeating this three times, they would give a loud whoop and a sharp yell. This performance was continued three or four hours. There was no variation in the modulation of their voices during all this time. The horrors of this experience I can never forger. It seemed as though my reason would be dethroned under this terrible, monotonous chant. When they stopped and in single file walked out of the tepee. I clasped my hand to my whirling brain and wondered if a more dreary or greater mental suffering could or would ever befall me.

CAMP RELEASE.

A few short removes now brought us to what proved to be the end of our journey, Camp Release. As soon as the tepees were set the squaws and Indians commenced running bullets. They had bar lead, bullet moulds, and a ladle to melt lead in. They also had a large amount of powder which they had plundered, so they were well prepared to make some defense. They gave us to understand that they expected to have a battle in a short time with the white soldiers. Also they gave us the cheering information that, if the white soldiers made an attack on them, we, the prisoners, would be placed in front of them, so that our rescuers' bullets would strike us and thereby give them a chance to escape in case of their defeat. We were now allowed to visit our friends a little while every day, and it was understood among us that if such proved to be the case we would lie fiat on the ground and take our chances.

The expected battle was fought on the 23d day of September at Wood Lake, eighteen miles distant from our camp, the Indians making the attack on General Sibley's forces. A

day or two before the battle there was a disagreement among the 419 Indians. Some of them, I think, were in favor of surrendering to Sibley. But a large majority were opposed to it, consequently a removal of the hostile Indians farther west took place; how far, I did not know. The captives they had were nearly all left with those who wished to surrender.

We could distinctly hear the report of muskets during this battle. We were now in the greatest danger of all our captivity; for, with defeat of the Indians, they were likely to return and slay all the white captives and perhaps some of the half-breeds. The latter appeared to be somewhat alarmed, and consequently we were all put to work by “Black Robinson,” throwing up breastworks. I was not a soldier, but soldier never worked with better will than I did to get those fortifications completed. I used a shovel; my squaw mother used an old tin pan. The remains of those breastworks are still visible, I am told. When I worked on them I had no idea that I should ever take any pride in the remembrance of my labor on them, but I do, although at the time I felt as though it would be as well, were I digging my own “narrow house.” We cannot afford to part with the remembrance of any incidents of our lives, even though they were heavily burdened with suffering and sorrow.

We were also made to construct breastworks inside the tepee. We sank a hole in the ground about eight feet in diameter and two feet deep, and placed the earth around the pit, thereby increasing the depth to about four feet. In this den eleven of us spent three nights. While the battle was raging, the squaws went out with one-horse wagons to take ammunition to the warriors and to bring in the dead and wounded Indians. Once when they returned one squaw was giving vent to her feelings by chanting, or singing, “Yah! ho! ho!” On making inquiry, I was told that her husband had been killed. On the next two days after the battle we were almost constantly looking and longing to see the soldiers make their appearance on the distant prairie. The hostile Indians had returned to their camp before sunset on the day of the battle, and it was evident to us by their appearance that they had met with defeat. But each day the sun went down, night came on, and our expectation and ardent desires were not realized. Therefore we were compelled through fear once more 420 to enter our own tepee and the dismal hole in the ground before mentioned,

to spend the night, with fearful forebodings that the hostile Sioux might return and kill us before morning. Our tepees were guarded during the night by Indians who pretended to be friendly, but I could not sleep.

Morning came with bright sunshine on the day of our deliverance, the 26th of September. Being so anxious to be delivered from our present surroundings, we could not refrain from gazing, as we had done on the two former days, nearly all the time in the direction of the battle ground, to see who should get the first view of our expected rescuers. About ten o'clock in the morning, to our great joy and admiration, the glimmer of the soldiers' bayonets was first seen and pointed out to us by the Indians, before we could see the men. As they came nearer and nearer, our hearts beat quicker and quicker at the increased prospect of our speedy release.

When they had come within about a half mile of our camp, the Indians sent a number of us to the Minnesota river for water, telling us the palefaces would be thirsty. They thought, as did the captives, that the soldiers would come right among us and camp near by; but they marched past about a half mile, where they pitched their tents. A flag of truce was flying ever every tepee. After the soldiers had passed by, some of the Indians came in laughing, saying the white soldiers were such old men that they had lost all their teeth. They had an idea that all of our young men were engaged in our civil war. The papooses were skirling around with a flag of truce, shouting “Sibilee, Sibilee!” as though they thought it great sport.

While the soldiers were pitching their tents, the general sent orders for us to remain in the tepees until he came for us. This was a very hard command for us to obey, now that an opportunity came for us to flee from our captors.

The tepees were set in a circle. After about one and a half hours, General Sibley marched his command inside of this circle. The general now held a consultation with some of the Indians, after which the soldiers were formed into a hollow square. The captives were

then taken into this square by the Indian who claimed to have protected them during their captivity, including also those captives who had been left with 421 them by the hostile Indians. Some had only one or two to deliver up; others had eight or ten. Those who had the largest number to deliver brought them forward in a haughty manner. My Indian father had seven captives to give up.

After all the white captives were delivered to the general in military style, the order was given to move to the soldiers' tents. I am sure every captive there offered up fervent and grateful thanksgiving that the hour of release had come. Right well did this Camp Release come by its title. I believe every adult captive has a warm place in her memory for this spot of prairie land, where so many destinies hung by a thread, with the balance ready to go for or against us. Every Indian, after having delivered his last captive, walked directly out of this hollow square, and was conducted by a soldier to where he, I supposed, was kept under guard.

This giving up or release of the captives was one of the most impressive scenes that it has ever been my lot to witness, Many of my fellow captives were shedding tears of joy as they were being delivered up. After reaching the tents prepared for us, many commenced laughing; oh! such joyful peals from some, and from others came a jerking, hysterical laugh. Others were rapidly talking and gesticulating with friends whom they had just met, as if fairly insane with delight in meeting relatives and friends and to be freed from their savage captors. And again there were others clapping their hands and whirling around in wild delight over the happy good fortune that had come to us.

As for myself, I could only remain silent, as if an inspiration had come to me from the great beyond, I gazed at this assembly of released captives while in their manifestations of joy and happiness, tinctured with grief from the loss of dear friends and relatives, and in quiet satisfaction, drew the fresh free air into my lungs and thought what contentment and peace freedom brings to one who has been a captive among the wild savages of the Northwest.

Library of Congress

None but those who have passed through the terrible experience can ever know the varied feelings and emotion which the deliverance produced.

We still wore our squaw suits. Some of us were given quarters in what were called or known as Sibley tents, and 422 others in smaller tents. It was now about four o'clock in the afternoon, and by reason of our not having had dinner, the soldiers treated us to a lunch, consisting of light biscuit and apple sauce. It was not served after modern style. We simply gathered around two large dishpans containing our lunch, and each helped herself. When supper time came the soldiers brought into Our tent, prepared to be served. an abundance of rice, hardtack, coffee and meat. My lunch was the most delicious repast I ever enjoyed, it being the first white cooking I had tasted since I ate breakfast in my own home the day I was captured; but my appetite for supper entirely failed me in consequence of having had the late lunch. and because of the excitement produced by our release. After the first day of our release, a campfire was provided us and we had the privilege of doing our own cooking. A guard was placed around our tents and campfire, the object, I suppose, being to keep away all would-be intruders.

My mind was now involuntarily absorbed in the strange sights of the afternoon. I could scarcely think a moment in regard to the condition or whereabouts of my family. I had not learned whether they all succeeded in making their escape or were all killed and scalped by the Indians.

We remained with the soldiers ten days for the purpose of giving our testimony against the Indians. The soldiers were very kind to us, they were always careful to provide campfires for us, and seemed at all times to take delight in making us feel at home, or at least among civilized people. Three different times during our stay with them they serenaded us with songs. As the sweet sounds of civilization greeted my ear. the great contrast between freedom and captivity among savages grew more prominent. I shall always hold these brave soldiers in most grateful remembrance.

RETURN THROUGH ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL TO WISCONSIN.

In the forenoon of our last day with the soldiers, Mrs. David Carrothers, Mrs. Earle, and myself, were out consulting with a soldier (Mrs. Carrothers' brother) on the chances or prospect of our getting to St. Peter. After having talked the 423 matter over, and when we were returning to our tent, I caught sight of my husband, of whom I had not known whether he was dead or alive, accompanied by J. W. Earle. I leave you to imagine our feelings at this meeting,—words would be inadequate.

Mr. Earle and my husband, having learned of the release of their families, had engaged Mr. William Mills, then of St. Peter, to go with a four-horse team with them to Camp Release, a distance of about 120 miles, for the purpose of bringing their families to St. Peter. They arrived at Camp Release about ten o'clock in the forenoon of the fifth day of October. Soon after dinner we started with our husbands, children, and Mr. Mills, for St. Peter, without an escort.

Whether or not our husbands were proud of us in our squaw dress we did not stop to question, for we were so glad to get started for civilization that we did not take a second thought as to our clothing, but rode triumphantly into St. Peter in squaw costume. Danger was thick around us on our journey. Consequently Mr. Mills hurried his team, forded the Redwood river soon after dark in the same place where we crossed when going west with the Indians, and stopped for the night in a small Indian log hut.

The three men stood on guard until two o'clock, when, fearing the presence of stray Indians, we became uneasy and concluded to journey on in the night. We arrived at the Lower Sioux Agency about sunrise, or where the village and the agency buildings had been located. All had been destroyed by fire. Here we visited the garden that had belonged to Dr. Humphrey, who was killed; and also all the members of his family, while trying to make their escape, excepting one son. We found some onions and tomatoes, and boiled a few; with the government rations, they made quite a good breakfast.

While there I could almost see where our house was located on Beaver creek, and had a pretty fair view of the prairie over which we were so frightfully chased by hostile Sioux Indians. The sight brought back vivid remembrance in my mind of just what transpired there on the 18th day of August. Before my mental eye was unrolled a panorama of fearful deeds 424 perpetrated by the wild men of the Northwest, shockingly painted, and having their heads decorated with feathers according to their rank; also the cruelties committed on innocent white people on that memorable day. I could, see the Indians as they surrounded us with their guns presented at the men, demanding of them a surrender of all their teams, etc., to them. I could see men, women, boys and girls, in almost every direction in alarmed haste, closely pursued by Indians shooting at them. I could see one man fall here, another there, and to all appearance Indians in the act of taking off their scalps. I could see two men holding up a flag of truce over a wagon in which a sick woman and her two children lay on a bed. I saw again the blaze and smoke arising from the burning bed, where Mrs. Henderson and her two children were put to death in a shocking manner. I saw my son as he passed me in great haste when he said to me, “Ma! run faster, or they will catch you.” Poor fellow; his remains were never found. Then, after the first fright was over, and the men and boys and their pursuers were out of sight, I could see myself with other captives walking back into captivity among a barbarous people, escorted by our cruel captors.

We still journeyed on the south side of the Minnesota river until we reached the ferry near Fort Ridgely, where we crossed the river, arriving at the fort about noon. On the road between the agency and the fort, we saw the body of a man who had recently been killed, of which we notified the military officials, who soon sent a burial party.

We took dinner at the fort, and then traveled on until sunset, and stopped with a German over night. I think this was the first house we passed where people lived. During the night rain came down in torrents, which made the roads very bad. Still we traveled on in the morning, and arrived at St. Peter just in the shade of evening. In, the outskirts of the village we were halted by the picket's “Who goes there?” Our answer was satisfactory, and we

were then allowed to go on, and at nine o'clock were being hospitably entertained by a Mrs. Fisher. Here we exchanged our squaw outfit for new calico dresses, and really began to feel as though we were white folks again.

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My babe's weight was now just eight pounds, and he was a little past seven months old. I found my twelve-year-old son here safe and well. Our family was now all together, except our oldest son, whose life was taken to satisfy the revenge of the Sioux warrior. My mind was now at rest, at least as to the whereabouts of my family, and we could begin to plan as to what we should do. We were among strangers and had but very little money. Our horses, cattle, sheep, farming implements, household furniture, etc., to the value of nearly three thousand dollars, had been all taken or destroyed by the Indians.

One afternoon, while my husband and I were conferring together about what was best for us to do, we were agreeably surprised by meeting an old neighbor just from our Wisconsin home, who had volunteered to carry financial aid to us, which had been donated by the neighbors. This aid was gratefully received and was a surprise to us. We now could buy some necessary articles of clothing and pay our fare back to Wisconsin.

After remaining in St. Peter about two weeks, we took a steamboat for St. Paul. While there, at the Merchants' Hotel, a gentleman (a stranger to us) called to talk with Mrs. Earle and myself about our captivity. After a short conversation, he excused himself for a few minutes, and on his return gave each of us fifteen dollars. The landlady was very kind to us, and gave me many useful articles of clothing, which, as we were very destitute, were more than acceptable. We remained in St. Paul three or four days, waiting for a boat to take us to La Crosse. There were no charges made against us for the hotel bill.

It was near the middle of November when we took the boat for La Crosse, where we arrived at noon. Here we went aboard the cars for our old home in Columbia county,

Wisconsin. On our arrival at the depot at Pardeeville, the platform was thronged with relatives and friends to greet us, as restored to them from a worse fate than death.

We remained there until the following March, when we returned to Rochester, Minnesota. The Indians having been 426 subdued and peace restored, we ventured back in the fall of 1865 to our Renville county home, from which we were so suddenly driven by the Indians, and we have ever since continued to live in this county.

The day of retributive justice came to some of the bloodthirsty savages. Little Crow, while on a horse-stealing expedition on the frontier, accompanied by his son and other Indians, was shot and killed by a Mr. Lampson, on July 3d, 1863, six miles north of Hutchinson. A military commission was established at Camp Release, in which over three hundred' murderous Indians were recommended to be hanged; but the final decision of President Lincoln was that only thirty-eight of them should be executed. The day of execution was ordered to be Friday, the 26th day of December, 1862, at Mankato.

The gallows was built in the shape of a rectangle. Ten Indians were on each of two sides, and nine on each of the other two sides. The trap for the whole was sprung at the same instant, and thirty-eight bloody Indian villains were dangling at the ends of as many ropes. The trap was sprung by William J. Duly of Lake Shetek, Murray county, who had three children killed and his wife and two children captured. they being at that time in the possession of Little Crow on the Missouri river.